

# HONORING THE ASPEN SKIING COMPANY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT

## HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 5, 2001

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the important environmental achievements of the Aspen Skiing Company.

As most people know, Aspen is one of the nation's premier ski resorts. It is nestled at the head of the Roaring Fork Valley in Colorado, and is surrounded by dramatic, rugged peaks which draw people from around the world to ski its slopes. The officials and employees of the Aspen Skiing Company know first-hand the value of the environment to their operations. If they do not preserve the beauty that surrounds this resort, then they know that they will lose skiers and ultimately profits. They know that a healthy, quality environment equals a healthy, profitable ski operation.

As a result, the company has taken a number of steps and adopted a number of practices that, in the long run, will help preserve the environmental quality of the valley. Their environmental and energy efficiency initiatives have won them many awards over the years. But as a recognition of their belief that environmental actions are not just transient and short-term policies, the company was awarded the Golden Eagle Award for Overall Ski Area Operation at the National Ski Area Association's annual convention. This award, established in 1993 by Mountain Sports Media, recognizes the positive environmental efforts of ski areas across the county. A panel of judges evaluates ski areas for their environmental efforts and grants these awards to deserving areas that employ environmental practices at their areas.

Aspen Skiing Company received this special award for its long-term environmental excellence and in setting high standards for other resorts to follow. It was also recognized for the fact that its environmental stewardship is evident in every facet of its operation—its purchasing of wind power, recycling demolished building material, water saving, energy efficient lighting, environmental scholarship program and its design of ski runs to reduce erosion and limit tree cutting. It also has established partnerships with the Environmental Protection Agency and the state of Colorado on pollution prevention practices.

All of these actions and more demonstrate that Aspen Skiing Company takes its environmental obligations seriously. Skiing is by its very nature an environmental sport. Skiers are exposed to the elements and the majesty of the mountainous environment. That experience is diminished when the resorts do not respect the landscape and take steps to preserve the very asset that draws people to the sport in the first place.

I congratulate Aspen Skiing Company for its great work and the model it is providing to resorts across the country. As the following story indicates, other ski areas, such as Vail, are also incorporating environmental values and practices at their operations. Let's hope that

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Aspen's example can be replicated at all resorts in Colorado and throughout the nation.

[From the Vail Daily]

ECO-CHALLENGERS: RESORT COMPANIES GO GREEN

(By Maia Chavez)

Has the time come for ski resorts to flex some real muscle in the eco-arena? Resort company decision-makers are betting a portion of their revenue that it has, and while that portion may still be little more than a token, the very existence of increasing structured environmental programs within resort companies is telling.

"I've seen a few significant industry trends since I've had an environmental position at the resort," said John Gitchell, environmental manager for Vail Resorts. "One major trend that has impacted us is the investigation of impact at ski resorts. When I started my job that trend was just beginning. But the impact of ski resorts is highly visible, and sooner or later, it was going to attract attention."

Gitchell also cited increasing strictness by regulators, scrutinization of both of development and resort operations, and ecoterrorism as having given a boost to the development of environmental programs within resort companies.

Recent episodes of eco-terrorism directed at ski resorts might be a harsh—and extreme—indicator, but as a cultural barometer they have served to force the issue onto the media's consciousness. Once in the spotlight, resort companies feel the pressure to take action, and to make their presence known as activists for the cause of environmentalism.

As part of the Partnership for Environmental Education Programs speaker series, Gitchell recently shared the podium with Aspen Skiing Company director of environmental affairs Auden Schendler for a presentation on the "greening the resort culture." As spearheads for environmental programs at their respective resort companies, Gitchell and Schendler represented an interesting counterpoint as they outlined recent developments at each resort.

### BIG MAC WORLD

In a humorous attempt to highlight the problem with a ski company trying to represent itself as an environmental activist, Schendler compared Aspen Skiing Company to the MacDonalds franchise.

"We're an investing company, too," he said. "We're trying to make money. The one difference from our perspective is that Aspen is privately owned. We're not beholden to shareholders. We can't actually be sued if we don't make enough money, though our owners don't like it much."

As a private company, Aspen has, in the past three years, developed one of the most extensive and award-winning environmental programs in the ski industry. According to Colorado Ski Country USA, Aspen is recognized as one of the country's most environmentally responsible ski areas, striving to "redefine corporate environmentalism."

### TAKING A STAND

Aspen Skiing Company was the first in the industry to create an Environmental Affairs Department, and to make it an integral part of their senior management.

What does that mean in practical-speak?

"We have a set of guiding principles, and the main principle is that we provide the opportunity for 'the renewal of the human spirit,'" explained Schendler. "That may sound cheesy, but the truth is that, as director of

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environmental affairs it allows me to do whatever I think best in order to uphold that principle. For instance, if I want to sell consulting services and help other ski areas become more environmentally responsible, I'm still conforming to our 'guiding principles'."

This year, the company produced its first published "sustainability report", a detailed catalog of the company's environmental programs and policies, statistics on its natural resource consumption and pollution, resource efficiency, hazardous waste management and compliance, community and environmental education programs, habitat, wildlife and open space protection.

### SUSTAINABLE SLOPES?

"Ski companies don't have to be rape-and-pillage organizations," said Schendler. "We don't have to clearcut slopes. We can have a more harmonious relationship with the community and the environment."

To that end, Aspen has implemented such initiatives as s-curved, bio-diverse and unbulldozed slopes to minimize erosion and protect wildlife, wind-powered ski lifts, employee and community initiatives and a pollution prevention partnership with the EPA and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Recent developments in Aspen Skiing Company's program have included the deconstruction of the mountain's popular Sundeck Restaurant and the Snowmass Lodge and Club, two buildings which were scheduled to be razed and rebuilt. Materials from both structures were harvested and recycled, with unsalvageable materials composted. According to Schendler, 94 percent of the structures were diverted from the Pitkin County landfill. That comes to 8,000 cubic yards of space, or an addition of three months to the projected life of the landfill.

The Sundeck Restaurant was rebuilt to conform with guidelines established by the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program. LEED is the nation's first national certification process for environmentally friendly building. The 3,700-square-foot deck was built from recycled materials, ozone-depleting CFCs in refrigeration systems, insulation and carpet pads were eliminated, landscaping was designed with native vegetation to reduce water use, low toxicity paints and sealants were used, and the list goes on.

### A DROP IN THE BUCKET

As Schendler pointed out, however, many of these adjustments are a mere drop in the bucket when factored into total resort operations.

"Thirty percent of the Sundeck Restaurant is wind-powered," he said. "But you have to ask, what percentage of our total energy purchase does that represent? The answer is half of one percent. Barely anything."

Does it have a major influence on pollution? Not really, said Schendler, who calculated the total impact as the equivalent of not driving your car for 97,000 miles, or planting 40 acres of trees. So, is this an example of "greenwashing"—a mere pretence on the part of a resort company?

"We couldn't power the whole operation with wind," explained Schendler. "It's too expensive. We'd go bankrupt. But what we can do is buy some wind power, make that statement, popularize it among our employees and guests, and encourage other ski areas to follow suit."

### VAIL DEVELOPS ITS POLICIES

Vail Resorts' environmental program began to take shape in 1998, although

Gitchell stressed that the arduous process of adopting a company policy is very much still in the formative stages.

Last season, Vail Resorts developed a computer-generated assessment tool allowing the four resorts to measure their environmental practices against an outline of preset standards. The tool was subsequently adopted by the National Ski Areas association who, after some modification, passed it on to resorts throughout the country.

The Skiing Company awarded Vail with the Silver Eagle award for environmental achievement in "visual impacts" for the Blue Sky Basin project, touted by Colorado Ski Country USA as the most environmentally sensitive ski area expansion undertaken in North America.

Among recent environmental initiatives are the prototype composting operation introduced last season at the Game Creek Club on mountain restaurant, third-party audits by an environmental consulting firm (initiated this summer), the replacement of 25 fleet vehicles with "townie" bicycles, and the purchase of 475 blocks of clean, wind-generated electricity per month.

"To emphasize Mr. Schendler's point, our wind energy purchases also come out to less than one percent of our total energy purchase," said Gitchell. "But the stage has to be set for continuing policies."

Gitchell said that Vail Resorts' goals for the coming year are to improve education and communication, improve regulatory systems, reduce green house gas emissions, and implement a sustainable building program. He said that likes the idea of Aspen Skiing Company's community environmental advisory committee, which integrates local environmental activists into the resort's management process.

"The bottom line is that we don't know for sure that we can achieve sustainability in this world," said Schendler. "By doing what we are doing, we are making the assumption that we can. And it's a vital leap of faith."

IN HONOR OF SENATOR JOHN AND  
MRS. ANNIE GLENN

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 5, 2001*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and recognize the Honorable Senator John Glenn and his wife Mrs. Annie Glenn, on their achievement of the Greater Communicator Award.

Senator and Mrs. Glenn have an incredibly dedicated history of public service, and have remained committed to serving their community for years. Mrs. Annie Glenn has suffered and overcome a severe stuttering problem, and after completing an intensive therapy program she now speaks confidently and has given countless speeches.

Senator Glenn was the first American to orbit the earth in 1962 and returned to space in 1998. He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1974 and retired in 1998. His distinguished career as a public servant earned him the respect and admiration of his colleagues and constituents alike.

Senator and Mrs. Glenn have dedicated their entire lives to the betterment of their local and international community. This Great Com-

municator Award is being presented to Senator John and Annie Glenn in recognition of their tireless efforts in public service and a lifetime of service. The Cleveland Hearing and Speech Center is presenting this prestigious award during their 80th anniversary celebration.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognition for two outstanding individuals, Senator John Glenn and his wife Annie, for their lifetime of outstanding achievement. Their love, dedication, and commitment to bettering their community has touched thousands of Americans.

HONORING DOCTOR WILLIAM  
GEORGE SHANKS UPON HIS RETIREMENT

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 5, 2001*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to a man who has dedicated himself to the care and well being of others. Dr. William Shanks has not only sought to improve the lives of others through the practice of medicine, but he has also been actively involved in various political and community-based organizations throughout his career. Upon his retirement, I would like to recognize the difference that Dr. Shanks has made in so many lives.

Born in Scotland in 1943, William came to the United States with his family and eventually took up residence in Philadelphia. This is where William studied from his early years through his medical schooling at Temple University. William's time was occupied not only with his studies, but also as a member of the local Teamster's Union. Following his medical education, his profession provided the opportunity to work at the Presbyterian Medical Center in Denver, Colorado. Dr. Shanks always harbored a sincere desire to serve his country and after his internship was completed in Colorado, he joined the United States Navy and was a diving and medical officer on a submarine. After serving his country, William returned for four more years at St. Joseph Hospital in Denver to complete his medical residency.

In 1976, Dr. Shanks relocated to Grand Junction, Colorado to the benefit of the community of Grand Junction. Dr. Shanks joined the staffs of St. Mary's Hospital and Medical Center and the Grand Junction VA Medical Center. Beyond the scope of his medical responsibilities locally as the Chief of Surgery and the Chief of Staff, Dr. Shanks chose to further serve his community by sitting on the board of St. Mary's Hospital, Colorado Trauma Institute, Colorado Medical Society Foundation and the Mesa County Independent Physicians' Association. Furthermore, William has had the distinct honor of serving as president of the Mesa County Medical Society, Denver Academy of Surgery and other organizations. At the intersection of medicine and politics, Dr. Shanks has recently been appointed to the Governor's Trauma Council.

Equally important, William and his wife Stella have raised four children—Maggie Anne,

Bradley, Fiona and Lorna. While maintaining a busy schedule providing care to his patients and the State of Colorado, Dr. Shanks always found solace in the great outdoors, woodworking and fishing. Mr. Speaker, William's retirement marks the beginning of his opportunity to spend more time with his family and hobbies. His contributions will never be forgotten, as his actions will forever touch the hearts and bodies of his patients. I would like to thank Dr. Shanks for his tireless efforts on behalf of the people of his county, the State of Colorado and the citizens of the United States. At this momentous time in his life, I extend my warm regards to Dr. Shanks and his family and wish them all of the best in the years to come.

HONORING CAPT NORMAND V.  
LUSSIER

**HON. GARY G. MILLER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 5, 2001*

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the numerous achievements and substantial contribution to our country of United States Naval Reserve Captain Normand V. Lussier, and to wish him well upon his retirement in March 2002. He will have served this country for over forty years.

Captain Lussier graduated from Oroville High School in 1962 and joined the Navy as a Seaman Recruit. After completing boot camp and Storekeeper "A" school at the Naval Training Center San Diego, he was assigned to the submarine tender USS *Nereus*. In September 1964, he volunteered for Vietnam and spent the next eighteen months unloading freighters and supervising a local national work crew in the Port of Saigon. Upon release from active duty in March 1966, he affiliated with the Naval Reserve and was promoted to Storekeeper Second Class. He continued to drill while attending college and law school.

In 1969, he graduated from San Diego State College with a Bachelor of Arts degree with distinction in History. In 1972, he received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of California Hastings College of the Law where he served on the Hastings Law Review.

While a Storekeeper First Class in 1971, he received a direct commission as an Ensign (Intelligence). Captain Lussier has since served in a variety of Naval Reserve Intelligence Program assignments. Since October 1999, Captain Lussier has served as Reserve Intelligence Area Commander (RIAC) Area Nineteen with overall responsibility for 13 reserve units and approximately 750 reservists. Prior to his current tour as RIAC, he was the Commanding Officer of ONI 0166. From 1994 to 1997, he was on the national staff of the Commander, Naval Reserve Intelligence Command as the Deputy Senior Inspector. Other tours include service as the DRIAC for Training for the IVTU; as the XO of DIS HQ 0166 and NICSEC 0166, and as the Administration Officer for NICTSKGRPMGT and NIC 0266. He has had two NRCIS tours.